

British subjects without having spent the necessary time here, and although in some respects it is necessary, in framing an Act of this kind, to give women additional powers over their brothers or their husbands in regard to this, there is no reason why, if you are making a new Act and taking in a new class of people, you should go back to the anomalies that have bothered the different provinces and the Federal Government in regard to elections for many years. The franchise has grown, and it has grown gradually, and conditions have arisen and been met in various places, but if you are making a new Act for the purpose of enfranchising a new class of people, there is no reason why you should not exercise a little common sense, and try and make it as fairly equal as possible. One thing was mentioned as an additional advantage given to women over men by reason of the fact that they would be entitled to vote as British subjects if they had spent three months in the constituency. This gets over an absurdity. In all the elections that have taken place for years there has been this difficulty: that a man might move from Quebec to Manitoba, or from Ontario to Saskatchewan a few months before an election and lose his vote. Thousands of such cases have occurred in former elections where good British-born subjects of the Eastern provinces have been deprived of the franchise that they have had for years. It was the intention of this Act to cut out the anomaly, so far as women were concerned, and as soon as an amendment is made to the Dominion Franchise Act it will be cut out, I think, as far as the men are concerned, so that if they live three months in a Dominion constituency and are British subjects they would be entitled to cast their votes.

Mr. DEVLIN: The remarks of the hon. Minister of Customs (Mr. Sifton) confirm me in the opinion which I have held since this Bill was introduced. Why should not the Dominion Elections Act be so amended as to include under the word "elector" the word "female," and then extend the qualifications of an elector to the female as well as to the male?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: That is what this Act does.

Mr. DEVLIN: But it is a separate Act. We are beginning to have too many Acts dealing with the franchise. My right hon. friend (Sir Robert Borden) has made some remarks respecting the War-time Elections Act. I cannot say that personally I suffered a great deal by the War-time Elections Act.

We have in the county which I represent, honest men on both sides, Conservative as well as Liberal, and we never suffer from any dishonesty or disorganization in elections. Each time questions were asked respecting the franchise, it became necessary to take up the Dominion Elections Act, the Soldiers Vote Act, and the War-time Elections Act. In future elections we will have to take up the Dominion Elections Act, the War-time Elections Act—I hope not the Soldiers Vote Elections Act, because I trust the war will be over—and this new Act entitled "An Act to confer the electoral franchise on women"; whereas, the Dominion Elections Act could be amended in a very simple way to include these different provisions.

Mr. SIFTON: The only objection to that would be that it would not become law until the War-time Elections Act was repealed, and that would deprive the women of the possibility, in case of a by-election, of their votes. Another objection would be that there would be no provision for getting them on the list. The only provision there is for putting them on the list is in the War-time Elections Act.

Mr. COCKSHUTT: I am in accord generally with the provisions of the Bill, and desire to congratulate the Prime Minister on redeeming his promise to bring down a Bill of this kind so early in the session. I think it will be met with favour throughout the Dominion of Canada, and the general principle has been accepted by a large number of the provinces, though our friends down by the sea are not moving quite as rapidly as Ontario and the West. There is one matter which I wish to speak about, which I do not see provided for here. Every male citizen who has the right to vote has the chance of becoming a candidate provided he will put up \$200 and get the necessary nomination papers and so on. I do not know whether it is the intention of the Prime Minister that ladies hereafter will be eligible candidates for the Dominion Parliament or not. Whether that follows as a matter of course, or whether other special requirements will have to be complied with, I am not quite clear. Therefore, I would like the Prime Minister to say whether this is really enfranchising them and putting them on an equality with men in all respects, and if it is qualifying them to become candidates at the next election, or earlier, if there is any by-election; or whether they must be permitted through some other legislation to